THESIS OUTLINE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

For the graduation project and thesis, I will take Chongqing, a city in Western China as the object of creation. The reason for that is combined with my personal experience and my attention to the grand narrative of China's media technologies in recent years. Since 2018, most of my artistic practices have been based on local work in Chongqing, including individual projects and collective collaborations. *Rear Area*, *Waterway Project*, *Chongqing Drift* and *Mountain City Defense System* are the film and lecture performance projects I produced, all of which are presented in the form of a combination of video and textual narrative, with content and topics primarily concerned with Chongqing's urban and rural space, warfare and industrial history. Looking back now, each individual project in that period is more like a partial slice, which jointly outlines the reality of modernities in Chongqing and southwest China. This thesis attempts to summarize and expand the previous work, placing Chongqing in a broader context, just as the city itself plays out, as the most important hinterland of China, the gateway to the west, whose destiny has always been accompanied by the complex entanglement of the relationship between place, center, border and world, towards an unknown distance.

2. THESIS STATEMENT

In this thesis I will try to arrange the structure in a flexible and divergent format. It will not be directly served as the text footnote of my graduation work, although they will partially overlap in structure and content, I would prefer the thesis itself can be established as an independent creative part as well. The narrative of the thesis will focus on combing the techno- infrastructures and geopolitical history of Chongqing and its surrounding southwest mountains in combination with local chronicles, story telling and science fiction, try to enter along multiple dimensions, take place as a sample to reveal the symbiotic relationship between its and even China's technological reality, nation-state and geo-strategy.

Ⅱ. BODY

Chapter 1. What is Ba-Shu? Notes on Wuxing (Five Phases) situating guide

1.1. Mountain forest, reservoir, and red Chongqing city
1.2. Archives from the Third Front Construction to the Western Development Strategy

As the beginning of this thesis, I will recall my experience of visiting the Expo 2010 Shanghai when I was a teenager from the perspective of my own memory as a stranger (my hometown is a city located in eastern China and subordinate to the Yangtze River Delta economic belt), which also constitutes my first impression of Chongqing , through a local pavilion with the theme of "Mountain Forest City". At the same time, it was the first time I came into contact with the whole world within one short time in a sense. Place and the world come at the same time……

Chongqing has very distinct historical, political and natural characteristics in different periods, and these characteristics perfectly correspond to the metal（金）, wood（木）, water（水）, fire （火）and earth（土） in "五行（ *wǔxíng*, Five Phases, a theoretical concept of Chinese traditional philosophy, was used for describing interactions and relationships between phenomena, and were conceived primarily as cosmic agents of change rather than a means to describe natural substances.)". This chapter will correspond to the mutual transformation of these five elements and unfold the time-space profile of Chongqing one by one.

Chapter 2. Great Rear-guard, border and inland: relations between port opening and modern infrastructure

This chapter focuses on the concept that Chongqing has always been known as "the Great Rear Area" of China in geopolitical history. It will trace back to an ancient battlefield in Chongqing between song dynasty and Mongolia in the 12th century, to the history of port opening and colonization in Chongqing in the 19th century, to the western urbanization after China's reform and opening up, and to Chongqing as a cyberpunk and TikTok city went viral on the Internet and pop culture world in recent years.

Chapter 3. Submontane futurism

3.1. Ba salt，lithium，SkyShuttle system

3.2. A 土主（tu zhu，Lord of the Soil and the Ground）who lives in a bunker，and the pre-life of AI city

The final chapter of this thesis will focus on Bi mountain（璧山，*bi shan*），a specific mountain in the west of Chongqing. It was once the territory of the ancient Ba state (an ancient tribal state in Southwest China，the source of Chongqing's civilization). Now it belongs to the building object of Western China's science and technology city strategy, gathering techno industries, logistics center, smart city and other techno infrastructures. The last part of this chapter will a storytelling of a real Chinese AI company by combining documentary and science fiction, and discuss the tension between institutional narrative and local story about AI city. In this story, Bishan's fate will connect Chongqing with the whole world again, but this time it will start from the Expo 2020 Dubai……

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